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# Measuring the Climate of Public Relations Majors

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# **“Measuring the Climate of Public Relations Majors”**

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Spring 2005**

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# Introduction

This study was conducted to research the current climate within the School of Advertising and Public Relations at The University of Tennessee, Knoxville. The goals of this study were to gauge the satisfaction of Public Relations majors in areas such as quality of advising, instructors, curriculum, and the overall program. The study also sought to identify perceptions of Public Relations majors concerning the Public Relations profession and major, the importance of professional development and the perceptions of their family and friends.

Various demographics were compared to responses in order to identify possible relationships. In addition, the study researched possible reasons that local Public Relations Student Society of America (PRSSA) members do not actively participate in chapter activities.

The study was conducted during the 2004-2005 academic year and respondents were Public Relations majors and pre-majors as of December 2004.

Completing these goals will afford faculty and staff members the opportunities to make improvements within the program according to student feedback and to provide an educational environment that is more beneficial for students

## **Background**

In 1945, The University of Tennessee, Knoxville started offering Journalism classes in the College of Business. By 1953, the first Journalism Degree was awarded from the School of Business. In 1968, the Journalism and Advertising disciplines left the College of Business and moved to the newly established College of Communications.

The College of Communications changed its name to the College of Communication and Information in the Fall of 2002 with the edition of the Information Sciences major. The College of Communications and Information houses four schools: The School of Advertising and Public Relations, The School of Information Sciences, The School of Journalism and Electronic Media, and The School of Communications Studies. Currently, The College of Communications and Information has 48 full-time faculty members and approximately 1,498 students. The Interim Dean of the college is Dr. Faye Julian and currently a search is being conducted to find her replacement.

In the early 1970s Public Relations courses were added to The School of Journalism at The University of Tennessee, Knoxville, allowing students to focus in Public Relations. The School of Journalism offered a Bachelor of Science Degree in Journalism with a Concentration in Public Relations to students who were interested in majoring in Public Relations. The curriculum consisted of several Public Relations courses that were supplemented with a selection of Journalism offerings.

In the fall of 2003, Public Relations was moved to The School of Advertising, which was renamed the School of Advertising and Public Relations as a part of a college-wide reorganization and expansion. The School of Advertising and Public Relations offers a Bachelor of Science Degree in Advertising with a Concentration in Public

Relations to students who are interested in the major. Public Relations courses such as *Intro to Public Relations, Case Studies, Public Relations Communications, and Public Relations Campaigns* are offered, and advertising classes now supplement the Public Relations curriculum. In the fall of 2005, the College of Communication and Information Sciences will establish a Public Relations major through the same school that will be available to entering Freshman.

Currently the School of Advertising and Public Relations has 500 students that are equally divided between the majors. There are 13 full-time faculty members and four adjunct faculty members. There is also a professional organization for students who are interested in Public Relations called the Public Relations Student Society of America (PRSSA). PRSSA has 71 members, but averages 20-25 attendees at meetings. Nationally, PRSSA has more than 7,000 members who are students of 227 colleges and universities.

Dean Julian has supervised the expansion and reorganization of college and she commented on the importance of maintaining a community amidst the change,

“During the past 30 years, we have heard a great deal in higher education about the fragmentation of the academic community. Critics claim that universities are no longer single entities, but rather are collections of schools. Rather than fragmenting further, we are now considering ways by which we can come together to form a closer, more mutually beneficial and productive community”  
(Julian 9).

For the past three years, the College of Communication has experienced vast transitions, and the effects of such transitions are inevitable. The purpose of this study is to examine what effects, negative or positive, the reorganization had on Public Relations majors. The results will be used to help faculty and staff learn more about fostering smooth transition in higher education.

## **Literature Review**

Recently, educational institutions are grappling with decisions to separate Journalism and Public Relations into different schools. Although Public Relations practitioners emerged from the field of Journalism, over the past seven decades Public Relations has grown as an industry. Some suggest that the growth in Public Relations is due to a growth in consumerist agendas in the US (Guppy 2). Guppy also highlights a study by Ketchum research that found that Journalism professionals are more cognizant of the importance of journalists being educated in Public Relations and advertising. Ketchum's research also found that print Journalism professors were less accepting of integrated curriculum than broadcast professors (Guppy 4). The study also identified the harsh environments that some Public Relations students are subjected to when they have some Journalism professors. The article outlines the biases that some educators have towards the Public Relations profession that are passed on to students who are exposed to them.

Recent studies also suggest that prejudices exist towards Public Relations education and the Public Relations profession. In a study of Public Relations educators, Donald Wright discovered that 56% of them had experienced prejudice or discrimination from their colleagues. Wright's results also suggest that the prejudice is more prevalent among print journalists and other Journalism faculty. Such research suggests that a rift exists now between Journalism and Public Relations that permeates the profession and educational institutions.



There have also been disagreements among educators on the school that the Public Relations major should be housed in. An article by Richard Faub acknowledges the need for Public Relations to be separate from Journalism, but also reminds readers that Public Relations should keep its roots in a communications foundation (Faub 42). Faub also proposes that if there is not a location that is a good fit for both advertising and Public Relations, then the two should be joined together. However, this combination can only be effective if the educators are experienced in their prospective fields. Lastly, Faub discusses the importance of Public Relations majors learning about business and management to be successful in the industry.

## Methods

In order to accurately assess the climate among students in the School of Advertising and Public Relations, it was important to use quantitative and qualitative responses to understand the feelings and desires of Public Relations majors. For the purposes of the study, there were too many Public Relations majors to interview and time would not permit the facilitation of focus groups. Therefore, the survey method was chosen for this study.

The survey was administered during Public Relations classes during the Fall 2004 semester. The students participated on a voluntary basis, which might have affected the response rate. At the time of the administration of the survey there were 235 Public Relations majors, and 100 responded. The survey consisted of 14 questions, which included a quality section about the overall program and a section to identify perceptions about the profession and major. (The instrument is shown in Appendix D)

- **Advantages of Surveying**

One advantage of surveying is that a large sample can be reached without having to conduct individual interviews. Another advantage is that the survey allowed respondents to write in responses and additional comments. Allowing respondents to write in feedback enabled them to identify concerns and themes that might have been unknown or otherwise overlooked. The survey method is also advantageous because it is less intrusive than other methods and respondents do not have to commit much of their time to participate.

- **Disadvantages of Surveying**

One disadvantage of the surveying method is that if it is self-administered by respondents, there is no way for them to ask questions about the questionnaire. The controlled answers on the survey can also be disadvantageous because respondents have limited responses to choose from.

## Results

Of the 100 respondents to the survey there were 8 Sophomores, 26 Juniors and 65 Seniors. Of those respondents, 7 were male and 83 were female. Due to the small number of Sophomores, respondents in that group were combined with juniors for the statistical tests. Of the respondents, 53% were members of the Public Relations Student society of America (PRSSA).

In order to be eligible to take the survey, students had to be either Public Relations majors or pre-majors. There are two possible degrees that Public Relations majors can receive from The University of Tennessee: Journalism with a Concentration in Public Relations and Advertising with a Concentration in Public Relations. For the purposes of this study, the two groups will be abbreviated as JPR and APR. The JPR group had 65 respondents, the APR group had 20 and 15 students were pre-majors. (Results shown in Figure 1 in Appendix A)

When respondents were asked whether or not Public Relations was their first choice in majors, 62% said yes and 38% said no. (Results shown in Figure 2 in Appendix A) Respondents were also asked if they had applied to another major before Public Relations and 17% said yes. Among the 17% that did not apply to Public Relations first, 44.4% of them first applied to the College of Business Administration.

When respondents were asked to use a 1-5 scale with 5 meaning excellent, to rate four quality variables concerning the Public Relations program, the means were as follows: group advising (2.88), individual advising (3.9), instructors (4.05), and overall program (3.91). Independent Sample T-tests were run to compare the school that the students' advisors reside in for the four quality variables. The results were as follows:

group advising ( $t = -.959$ ,  $df = 81$ ,  $p = .341$ ), individual advising ( $t = .719$ ,  $df = 93$ ,  $p = .474$ ), instructors ( $t = .288$ ,  $df = 94$ ,  $p = .774$ ), and the overall program ( $t = -.194$ ,  $df = 94$ ,  $p = .847$ ). There were no significant differences found in the responses. Therefore, both groups felt similarly regardless of the school that their advisors resided in.

Independent Sample T-tests were also run to compare class standing for the four quality variables. A significant difference was found with group advising ( $t = -2.65$ ,  $df = 74$ ,  $p = .010$ ). The JPR group had a mean of 2.68, while the APR group had a mean of 3.42; therefore the APR group finds group advising more valuable. No other statistically significant differences were found.

Using a 1-5 scale with 5 meaning strongly agree, respondents rated their levels of agreement with a series of statements. The overall means for the sample are as follows:

1. *Students in other majors respect Public Relations majors.* (2.98)
2. *Professors who do not teach Public Relations respect the profession.* (2.83)
3. *My family understands what Public Relations is.* (3.06)
4. *My family is confident that I will find work in Public Relations upon graduation.* (3.33)
5. *The Public Relations curriculum challenges me as a student.* (3.63)
6. *Upon graduation, I will be prepared to enter the Public Relations job force.* (3.65)
7. *Being a member of PRSSA is valuable to me.* (3.32)
8. *Participating in internships is an essential way to enhance career opportunities in the Public Relations field.* (4.47)

The means indicate that overall, students agreed most with the importance of participating in internships, they moderately agreed with statements 3-7, and they were neutral concerning questions 1-2. (Results shown in Figure 3 in Appendix A)

Independent Sample T-tests were run to compare the responses of the Sophomore/Junior group to those of the Senior group. The t-test results were significant only for two statements: #5 ( $t = 2.511$ ,  $df = 87$ ,  $p = .014$ ) and #7 ( $t = 2.55$ ,  $df = 72$ ,  $p = .013$ ). For statement #5, the means were 3.88 for Sophomore/Junior and 3.49 for Seniors. For statement #7, the means were 3.75 for Sophomore/Junior and 3.08 for Seniors. The means for Sophomores/Juniors were higher for both statements. No other statistically significant differences were found. (Results shown in Figure 4 in Appendix A)

An Independent Sample T-Test was also run to compare male and female responses to the statements. The t-test results for the statements were: #7 ( $t = -2.701$ ,  $df = 85$ ,  $p = .008$ ) and #8 ( $t = -2.22$ ,  $df = 96$ ,  $p = .029$ ). The means for statement #7 were male= 2.56 and female=3.49, and for statement #8 male=4.05 and female = 4.56. Significant differences were found with statements #7 and #8. The means for females were higher for both statements. No other statistically significant differences were found.

When respondents were asked to rate PRSSA overall on a scale of 1-5, the mean was 2.52. A mean of 2.5 indicates that respondents found PRSSA to be somewhat valuable. No significant differences were found between the responses from each classification.

The survey also provided respondents with opportunities to write in answers. Questions #2B, #4, #6B, #8, #9, and #10 allowed respondents to offer feedback. (Responses provided in Appendix B) The themes that were identified were as follows:

- 2B. *Why or why was not Public Relations your first choice in majors?*
- Always wanted to study Public Relations
  - Interesting profession
  - Interested in another major first
  - Close to advertising or broadcasting
  - Still figuring out career choice
4. *Please explain why you are majoring in Public Relations.*
- Interested in the PR's links to business
  - I have the skills to be successful in the field
  - Public Relations prepares me for other possible careers
  - What field you want to work in
  - Like to research, write or speak
  - Fun and interesting
  - I like working with people
- 6B. *Why are you a member of Public Relations Student Society of America?*
- For networking opportunities
  - To learn more about the field
  - It helps prepare for the future
  - It helps get me more involved
  - Instructors and others stress the benefits of membership
  - Looks good on the resume
  - For Bateman Case Study competition
8. *Indicate the primary reason why you do/do not generally attend the PRSSA meetings.*
- Important for networking
  - Speakers
  - To get involved
  - Class conflicts
  - Other commitments
  - Work Conflicts
9. *Please feel free to share any suggestions you have for improving PRSSA meetings.*
- Alternate meeting times
10. *Feel free to provide any additional comments regarding the above statements. (See Appendix 4)*

No responses

## **Discussion**

Before the discussion of the results and implications of the study, it should be noted that the majority of respondents were seniors and females. It is unknown whether or not this was a representative sample of Public Relations majors at the University of Tennessee. One should also note that the survey had 100 respondents, which constituted 43 percent of Public Relations majors.

## **Implications of Results**

When respondents were asked whether or not they had applied to another major before Public Relations, 17 percent said yes. Of the 17 percent that had applied elsewhere, 44.4 percent of them had applied to the College of Business Administration first. The College of Business Administration has a higher GPA requirement than that of the College of Communication and Information Sciences, which might lead students to apply to other majors after being rejected from the College of Business Administration.

When students were asked to rate the quality variables of the Public Relations program, there were no significant differences in the responses according to the school in which the students' advisors resided in. This finding suggests that overall students are satisfied with the program regardless of whether their advisors are Journalism or Public Relations professors. However, there was a significant difference in the satisfaction of Sophomore/Juniors and Seniors with group advising. The fact that Seniors were less satisfied with group advising can be attributed to the relocation of the major from The School of Journalism to The School of Advertising. While the major was part of the School of Journalism, students participated in individual advising, but had to change to

group advising with the relocation. It is not surprising that those students would feel less satisfied with the change because the new format was unfamiliar to them.

When the results from the perception section were compared according to the classification of the respondent, there were significant differences with questions #5 and #7 which were: #5 *The Public Relations curriculum challenges me* and #7 *Being member of PRSSA is valuable to me*. The fact that Sophomores/Juniors felt more challenged by the curriculum suggests that perhaps as students matriculate through the program the curriculum becomes easier. The implications of these findings are both positive and negative. The positive aspect is that Seniors are more confident in their competencies, leading them to feel that they have a better grasp on their studies. The negative aspect is that this result suggests that Seniors feel unchallenged in their upper level classes.

Results from a comparison of male and female responses in the perception section showed that there was a significant difference between male and female responses for questions #7 and #8. The first result regarding the value of a PRSSA membership was significantly lower in males, who moderately agreed with the statement while females agreed. The second result was concerning the importance of participating in internships, and again females were in more agreement with the statement than males.

The question regarding how much PRSSA members value the membership showed that overall, members feel that the membership is somewhat valuable. This result has several implications. It is possible that PRSSA members are unaware of the benefits of their memberships, or perhaps they do not find the membership to be incredibly valuable.



The most prevalent themes that were identified in the open-ended responses were that students explored other majors first and are studying Public Relations because they believe that they have the skills to succeed. It appears that most students are members of PRSSA because of the networking opportunities and that people who do not attend meetings often are unable to attend mostly because of work and prior commitments.

## **Suggestions**

One of the most important findings of this study was that students were not dissatisfied with any aspect of the program. This finding suggests that currently students are pleased with the program and that faculty and staff members are doing an excellent job. With that being said, there were a few areas that could use some minor adjustments.

Many of the significant differences that were identified occurred between respondents of different classifications. One might gather that the lower satisfaction of the seniors concerning individual and group advising stems from the relocation of the Public Relations major. With this in mind, faculty and staff should be cognizant of the importance of communication and feedback with students during the next transition that will occur when Public Relations is established as a major. There is no guarantee that students will be totally satisfied, but perhaps with increased communication and feedback students will adjust better to the changes.

The significant differences in responses from the perception section could be remedied with more Public Relations course offerings. Perhaps, this improvement will be made when Public Relations is established as a major during the next academic year. The themes that were identified in the open-ended responses also offer multiple reasons that

respondents are majoring in Public Relations. (See Appendix 2) Those themes can be used to identify subjects that might be interesting and helpful to Public Relations majors in the future.

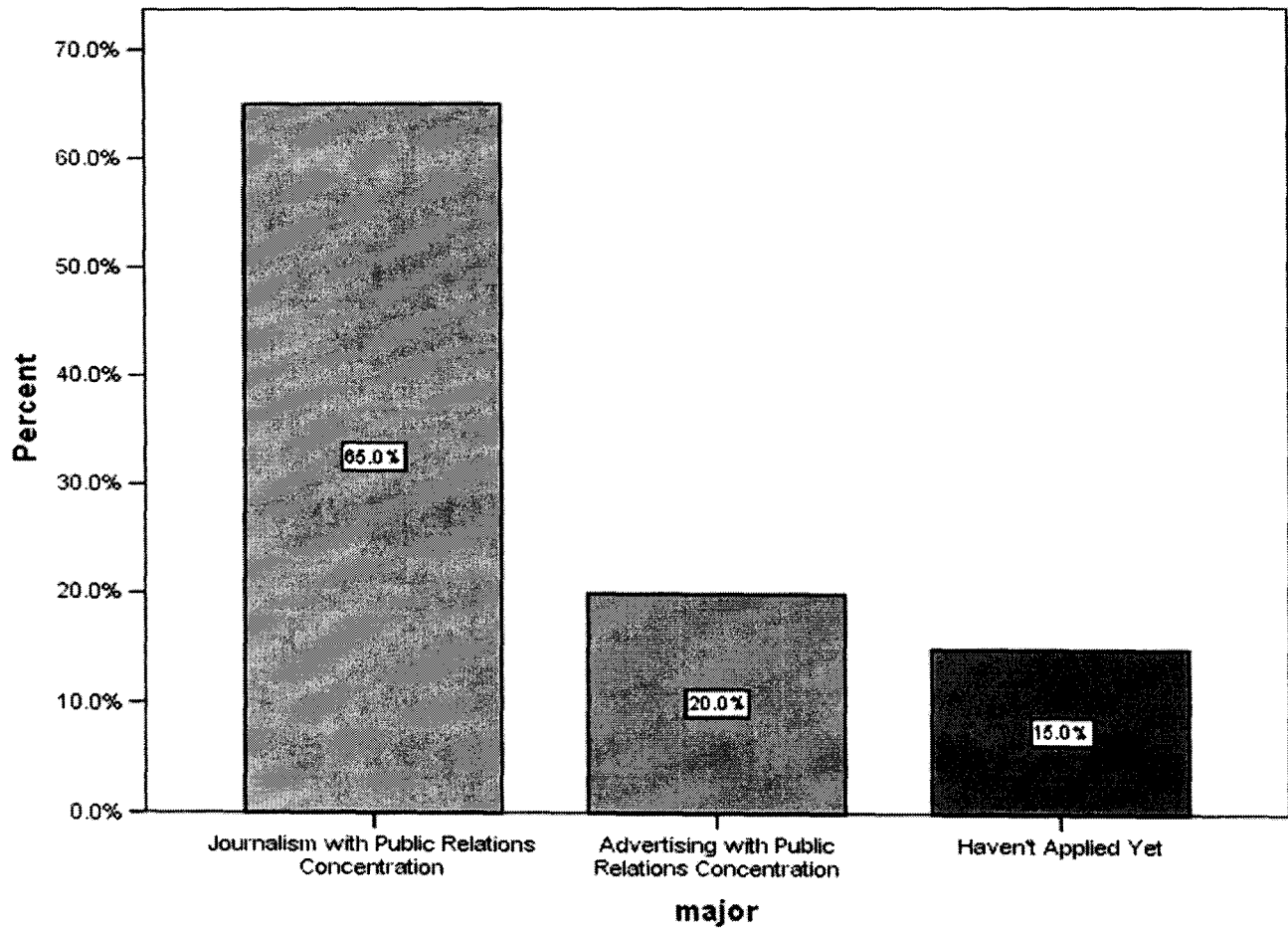
The questions regarding PRSSA suggest that members do not find the membership valuable. One might suggest that PRSSA executive board members find additional ways to highlight the benefits of being a member of PRSSA. The strongest themes that arose through the open-ended questions concerning PRSSA were about the times and days of the meetings. It might be good for PRSSA executive board members to consider alternating meeting nights to allow people with night classes to attend at least one meeting per month.

## **Expressions of Gratitude**

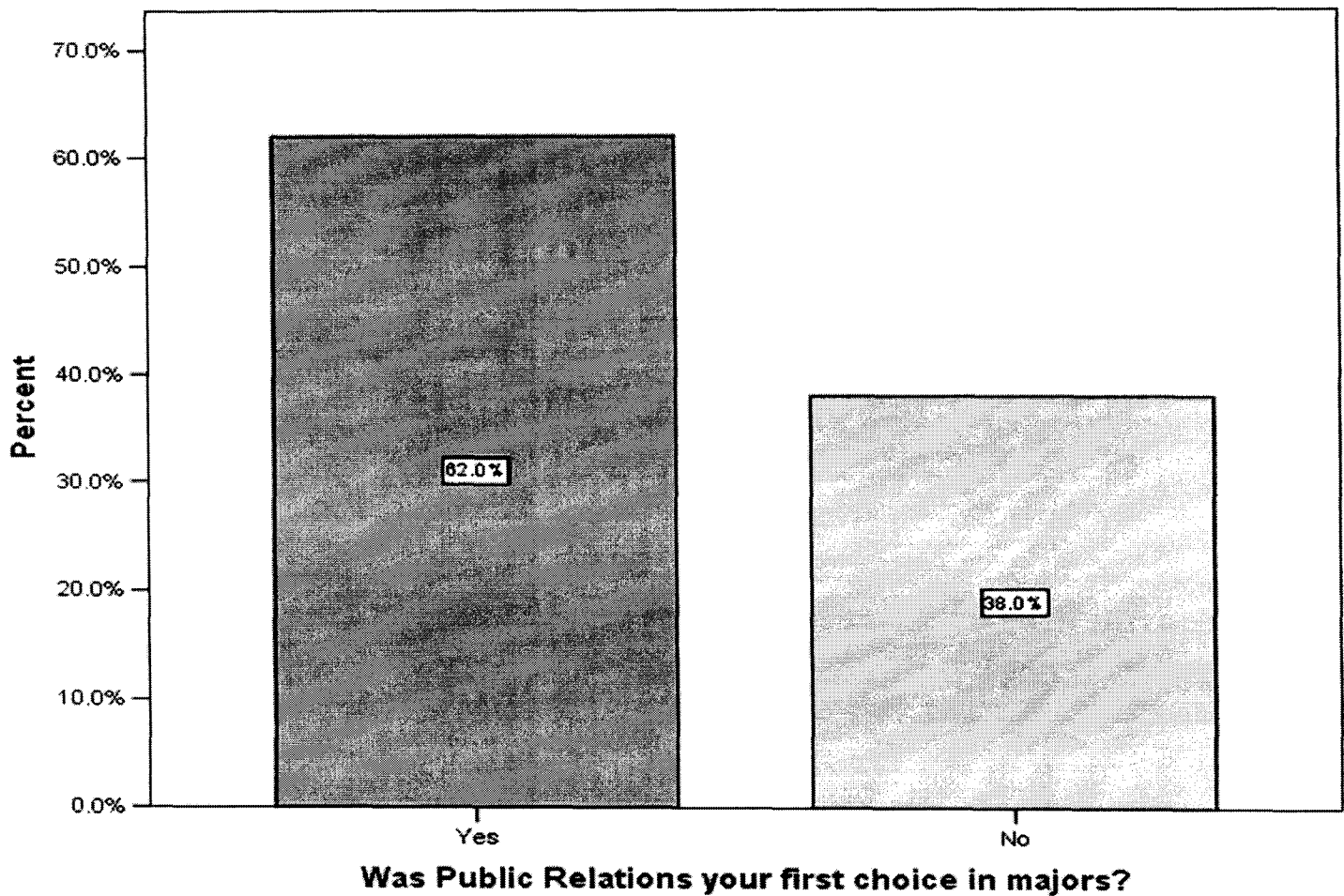
First and foremost, I would like to thank my senior project advisor Dr. Bonnie P. Riechert, APR for her patience while acting as my advisor. I would also like to thank Dr. Riechert for being a great motivator for me as well as other students in our department. I would also like to express my thanks to the University Honors Program for affording me the opportunity to conduct this research that I hope will help Public Relations majors in the future. Lastly, I would like to thank Cary Springer, a statistician from The University of Tennessee Office of Information Technology Customer Tech Support, for her patience and guidance in analyzing my data. Without her help, I would only have numbers on a spreadsheet. Cary helped me understand what the implications of the results meant, and helped me take my first stab at putting statistics in written form.

# Appendix A

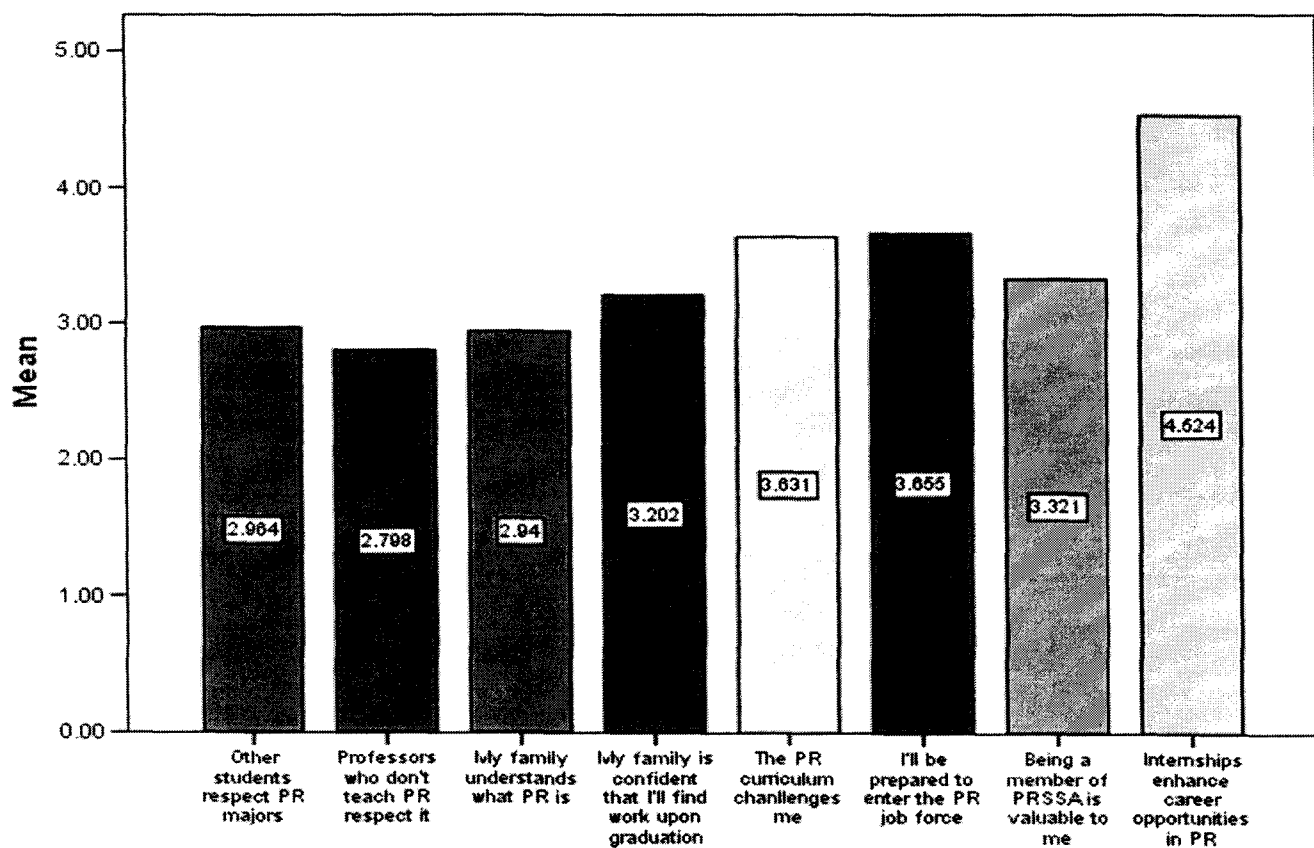
# Fig. 1: Distribution of Majors



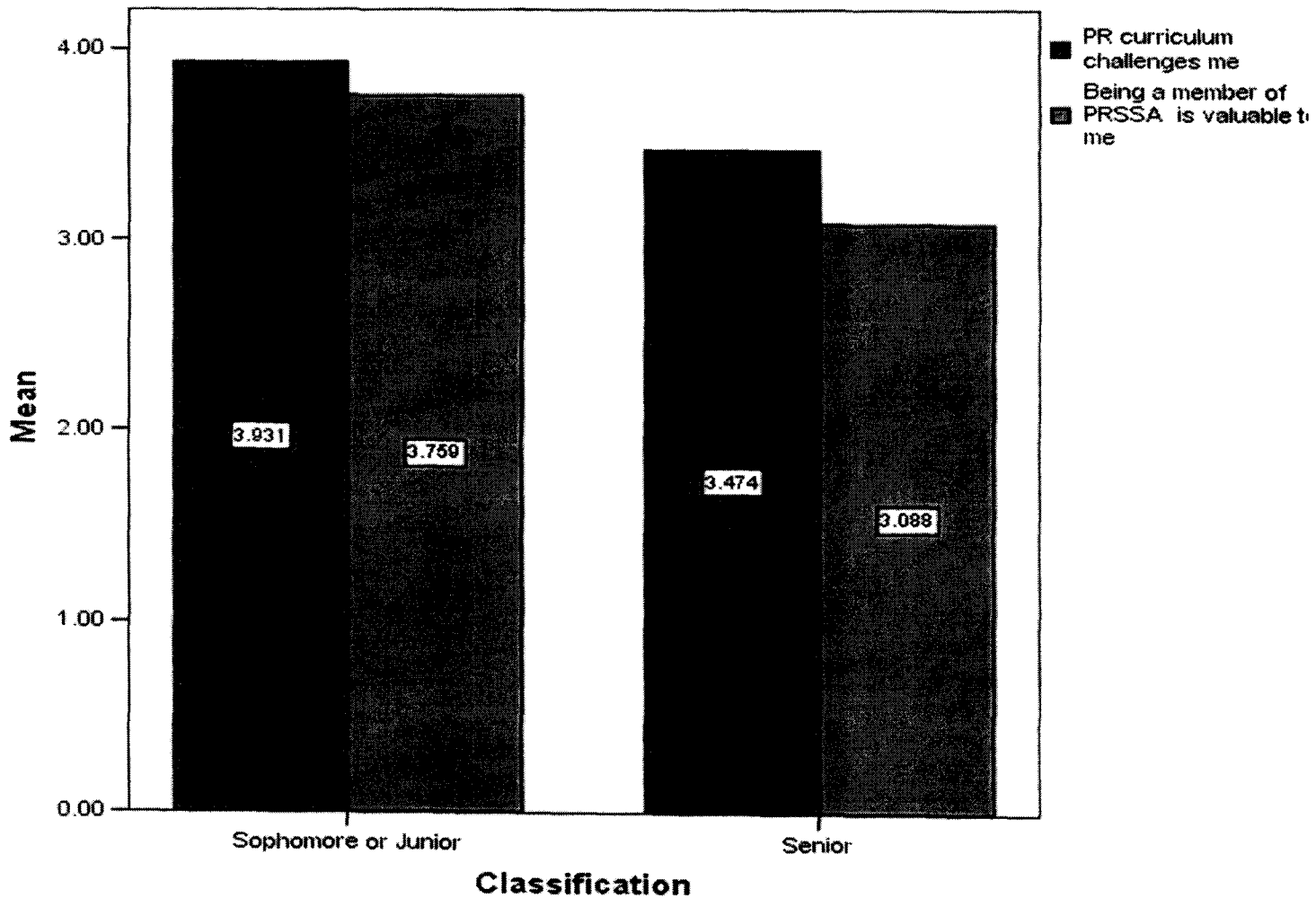
**Fig. 2: Distribution of students that chose other majors prior to Public Relations**



**Fig. 3: Means for Perception Section  
(Question #10)**



**Fig. 4: Means for Significant Differences in Perception Section (Question #10)**



# Appendix B



# Qualitative Survey Responses

## Why or Why not was PR Your first choice in majors?

### **Always wanted to study Public Relations**

- I just knew this was what I wanted to do
- I have always been interested in PR
- I knew that I wanted to go into PR since high school
- I was on my high school paper staff and became very interested through what I learned in my Journalism class
- I love PR. A high school marketing teacher informed me of PR in the 11<sup>th</sup> grade.
- That's what I have always been interested in
- I enjoy it and have always wanted to do it
- Nothing else appealed to me
- It is what I decided on in high school
- I took marketing in high school and always loved the PR aspect

### **Interesting profession**

- I am interested in the art of communication, specifically PR
- This is what I wanted to do
- I like the field
- It is a field that I was interested in
- It interested me, so I never had a reason to change
- Interesting
- I find it very interesting
- PR offers a variety of tasks so that one won't get bored

### **Interested in another major first**

- I started in business, but didn't like it. I thought PR sounded interesting so I switched
- I wanted to major in International Business.
- I wanted to be a business major
- I started in architecture, then civil engineering. Eventually I went to career services and they helped me find Public Relations.
- Business was my other option, but I like PR better
- I needed to check out a few thousand majors before choosing
- I majored first in English, but didn't know what to do with the major
- I originally wanted to do Journalism, then I decided that PR was the better career choice
- I started in business, and didn't like it
- I came into college undecided
- I originally was a nursing major
- There's no Theatre major at UT
- I had previously worked as a bank teller so I picked Finance as my major

**Close to advertising or broadcasting**

- It is close to advertising w/out actually doing it
- Advertising is my first
- Originally an advertising major
- I originally chose Broadcasting then switched when I got more of an idea of what PR was

**Still figuring out career choice**

- Uncertain on career goals
- I was still figuring out what I wanted to study. I tried multiple things

**Miscellaneous**

- The PR program is good
- I felt that I could get the most hands on experience for my future career
- I thought that it was a major that would be diverse and broad enough to apply to many jobs.
- Wanted to work in PR and use writing skills to work at an agency

**Please explain why you are majoring in PR.****PR is a broad degree**

- Want to have unique and creative career where I can use all of my skill sets. PR is broad field with many options
- It is a very broad degree, and PR majors seem to be able to find jobs
- The skills that I learned can be used in any field
- When I first started looking, it seemed like a career that could go in many possible directions.
- It has exciting career choices
- More career options, you can choose how involved you want to be, there are writing opportunities
- Can be used in many professions

**Interested in the PR's links to business**

- I love the mix of business, communication, and psychology that takes place within PR
- I like that it incorporates business and planning tactics
- I feel like it is more of the people side of business
- I think it is an interesting and important field
- I find the subject matter interesting and job descriptions interesting
- I see PR as a vital role in the business world-It is challenging but a rewarding job

**I have the skills to be successful in the field**

- I feel I have the qualities to be a successful PR practitioner
- My skills and interests are best suited for PR
- It developed skills I was lacking and enhanced my current skills
- What I liked to do match PR
- I enjoy Public Relations
- Because it is the best major to accentuate my talents and help my career in institutional/ educational development
- I am gifted in writing, speaking and planning
- I enjoy it and I am good at it
- I enjoy it
- It incorporates everything that I want to do

**Public Relations prepares me for other possible careers**

- It will help me in sales, writing and public speaking
- I feel it is also a good stepping-stone for other careers
- To get better at writing and communicating to prepare me for law school and my career

**What field you want to work in**

- I want to be a press secretary and I thought that it would be the best major
- I would love to work in the non-profit sector.
- I want to work in promotions for the music industry
- I am interested in event planning
- I am interested in going into event planning
- I wanted to work in community relations
- I hope to deal with people in the sports world

**Like to research, write or speak**

- I like to write
- I like writing
- I am interested in writing
- I am better at research, writing and new ideas
- I like communicating
- I love writing
- I enjoy project work and interacting with the public, so it seemed to be a good fit

**Fun and interesting**

- It seemed fun
- I am interested in the field
- I feel that I will enjoy the field
- It seemed good and interesting

**I like working with people**

- I like working with people
- I hope to learn more on dealing with people in an effective and professional way
- I love working with people

**Miscellaneous**

- Because I was advised to by a career advisor in High School
- I feel Public Relations is an imperative component in companies today that are trying to maintain a balance of effective communication, ethical behavior, and effective publicity.
- I want to be a part of this promotion

**Why are you a member of PRSSA?****For networking opportunities**

- B/c it will give me networking opportunities and give me more opportunities to learn about PR
- It is a great learning and networking opportunity
- It is very beneficial for networking, internships and so forth.
- Networking
- A good networking opportunity not to be missed
- Good information, good networking and good guest speakers
- It helps talk to other PR majors about what's going on in the program, and it can help with outside PR contacts
- I enjoy listening to PR professionals
- To hear speakers and network with fellow students and speakers
- Networking, more experience in the field
- Good opportunity to network
- Networking for jobs
- To help network
- Networking and offers opportunities
- Network
- Networking

**To learn more about the field**

- Because I want to learn more about PR and find more opportunities by being in PRSSA
- I want to learn more about my major and careers it offers
- It gives us a good place to find out about PR job opportunities and the industry as a whole

**It helps prepare for the future**

- It has helped me to prepare for a career as well as offered me leadership opportunities
- It is helping me prepare for the future

**It helps get me more involved**

- Get more involved
- I wanted to be more involved with my major
- It has good opportunities
- To get involved
- To get to know people

**Instructors and others stress the benefits of membership**

- Because instructors stress the benefits
- Everyone says you have to, so I am in it

-

**Looks good on the resume**

- It looks good on a resume
- For my resume
- Resume builder

**For Bateman Case Study competition**

- I had to for the Bateman Case Study competition
- I needed to be for Bateman
- Bateman competition

**Miscellaneous**

- Because I feel it is vital to my success
- I was recommended to join after winning the Public Relations Alumni Scholarship my freshman year.

**Indicate the primary reason why you do/do not generally attend the PRSSA meetings.****Important for networking**

- I feel that they are important for networking
- I enjoy learning and networking
- I attend them because I love the free food and like learning more information from people who are in PR.

**Speakers**

- The speakers are always interesting and informative
- They are informative
- I attend to hear the speakers
- I enjoy the speakers

**To get involved**

- The meetings are a great way to stay involved
- I get along well with the members

**Class conflicts**

- I have a class during the meeting times
- If I need the time to study for a test or a group meeting
- Bad scheduled time (evening classes)
- Conflicts with class
- Bad timing
- I am not available during the meeting times
- Too busy
- Busy

- Class/workload
- Class

### **Other commitments**

- Dance Marathon meetings conflict w/ PRSSA meetings
- Other meetings
- Conflict with other more prominent activities
- I have other meetings for other organizations that I have been a part of for longer
- Other commitments
- Conflicting time schedules
- Other scheduled events
- Conflicts with other activities I'm involved in
- Other meetings
- Conflicts with other organizations

### **Work Conflicts**

- Work
- Work or other requirements
- I have to work, and PRSSA meetings are a low priority
- I have work
- I work at night
- I am always working on the day and time of the meeting
- Work
- They conflict with my work schedule

### **Miscellaneous**

- I don't hear much about the meetings
- Too long, too late
- Don't care about playing little business games for school
- Too long, too late

**Please feel free to share any suggestions you have for improving PRSSA meetings.**

### **Alternate meeting times**

- Different meeting times every other week
- Vary the days more (M-Th)
- Maybe change up the weekdays that the meetings are held so more people can attend

**Miscellaneous**

- Somehow increase attendance
- Maybe more advertising
- Start on time
- Have more student involvement. Make it less like a boring class and more interesting to listen to
- I wish that I'd known about PRSSA earlier and joined as a freshman, then I could've been more involved.

***Please feel free to provide any additional comments regarding any of the above statements***

- Those in PR outside of academia hold no value for PRSA, this is especially true in larger cities

# **Appendix C**



## References

- Falb, Richard. "Proposal: Join PR and Advertising Education—Away from Journalism or Business." Public Relations Quarterly 36.4 (1991/1992): 42-45.
- Guppy, Macy. "Pooling resources: The pros and cons of PR in J-school." Quill 88.7 (2000): 116-119.
- Julian, Faye. "Message from the Dean." Full Circle 6.2 (2002): 1, 9.
- Wright, Donald. "We have rights too: examining the existence of professional prejudice and discrimination against Public Relations." Public Relations Review 31.1 (2005): 101-110.

# Appendix D

# Survey

# "Measuring the Climate for Public Relations Majors"

1. Which major are you classified as? (**Check only one**)

☐ Journalism with Public Relations Concentration

☐ Advertising with Public Relations Concentration (*as of Spring '04*)

2a. Was Public Relations your first choice in majors?

☐ Yes

☐ No

2b. Why- or why not? (*explain below*)

3. Did you apply to another major before you applied to the Public Relations program?

☐ Yes (if yes, which major? \_\_\_\_\_) **please write in**

☐ No

4. Please explain **why** you are majoring in public relations: (*write in below*)

5. Please rate the following on a scale from 1-5. (1=poor 3=moderate 5=excellent)

Quality of group advising	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
Quality of individual advising	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
Quality of instructors (overall)	1	2	3	4	5	
Overall quality of Public Relations program	1	2	3	4	5	

6a. Are you a member of Public Relations Student Society of America (PRSSA)?

☐ Yes

☐ No (if "no," jump to #10)

6b. Why? (*please explain below*)

7. Rate how often you attend PRSSA meetings, using a scale, where: 1=never, 3=sometimes, 5=always.

(**circle answer below**)

1      2      3      4      5

8. Indicate the primary reason **why** you do/do not generally attend the PRSSA meetings. (*explain below*)

9. Please feel free to share any suggestions you have for improving PRSSA meetings. (*explain below*)

**Please Continue to the Next Page**

**Thank you!**

# "Measuring the Climate for Public Relations Majors"

**10. Please read the following statements, then determine your level of agreement, where: 1=strongly disagree, 3=moderately agree, 5= strongly agree (circle one only)**

Students in other majors respect Public Relations majors.	1	2	3	4	5
Professors who do not teach Public Relations respect the profession.	1	2	3	4	5
My family understands what Public Relations is.	1	2	3	4	5
My family is confident that I will find Public Relations work upon graduation.	1	2	3	4	5
The Public Relations curriculum challenges me as a student.	1	2	3	4	5
Upon graduation, I will be prepared to enter the Public Relations job force.	1	2	3	4	5
Being a member of PRSSA is valuable to me.	1	2	3	4	5
Participating in internships is an essential way to enhance career opportunities in the Public Relations field.	1	2	3	4	5

Feel free to provide any additional comments regarding any of the above statements.

**(write in comments below)**

Indicate your gender:

☐ Male ☐ Female

Indicate your student classification:

☐ freshman ☐ sophomore ☐ junior ☐ senior ☐ other

Indicate which school your assigned advisor is in:

☐ School of Journalism & Electronic Media

☐ School of Advertising & Public Relations

Indicate your anticipated graduation date: \_\_\_\_\_ (Month, year)

**Thank you!**

# **Appendix E**

## FORM A

IRB# \_\_\_\_\_

### Certification for Exemption from IRB Review for Research Involving Human Subjects

**A. PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR(s) and/or CO-PI(s):**

Principal: LaShonda K. Louallen  
Co- PI: Dr. Bonnie Riechert (advisor)

**B. DEPARTMENT/UNIT:**

Department of Advertising and Public Relations

**C. COMPLETE MAILING ADDRESS AND PHONE NUMBER OF PI(s) AND CO-PI(s):**

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Knoxville, TN 37920  
(803) 351-0760

Dr. Bonnie Riechert  
School of Advertising and Public Relations  
476 Communications Building  
Knoxville, TN 37996-0343  
(865) 974-3048

**D. TITLE OF PROJECT:**

“Measuring the Climate for Public Relations Majors”

**E. EXTERNAL FUNDING AGENCY AND ID NUMBER**

**F. GRANT SUBMISSION DEADLINE**

**G. STARTING DATE:**

November 2004

**H. ESTIMATED COMPLETION DATE**

May 2005

**I. RESEARCH PROJECT:**

**1. Objective(s) of Project**

The survey has a two-fold purpose. First, current Public Relations majors will be surveyed to measure attitudes about the major such as quality of advising, instructors, curriculum, and one's perception of the public relations field. Secondly, the survey will identify reasons why local Public Relations Student Society of America members are not actively participating in the chapter.

**2. Subjects**

The respondents will all be in an undergraduate Public Relations Class that is offered.

**3. Methods or Procedures**

A questionnaire will be handed out at the beginning of each class period.

**4. CATEGORY(s) FOR EXEMPT RESEARCH PER 45 CFR 46: (2)**

**J. CERTIFICATION:** The research described herein is in compliance with 45 CFR 46.101(b) and presents subjects with no more than minimal risk as defined by applicable regulations.

Principal  
Investigator LaShonda K. Lualaba LaShonda K. Lualaba 10/28/04  
Name Signature Date

Student  
Advisor Bonnie Riechert Bonnie Riechert 10-28-04  
Name Signature Date

Dept. Review  
Comm. Chair \_\_\_\_\_  
Name Signature Date

**APPROVED:**

Dept.  
Head CE Paudyal CE Paudyal 11-2-04  
Name Signature Date